

Overby Odyssey

February 2024

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Greetings partners in ministry!

A lot of life is about plodding along, and continuing to faithfully do what God has called you to do. That has been much of the past month and a half for us. It hasn't been easy, but it has been a "one step at a time" sort of month. Scott is really enjoying doing the ministry of teaching at Black Forest Academy and ministering to the students there. He's also gearing up for track season (starts Feb 27) and is looking forward to the discipleship opportunities that provides.

We have been busy since the beginning of November with our little foster baby toddler. He's our sixth foster child. As you may remember, we had another foster newborn baby in October, but he was only with us for 10 days. The toddler and his family cause Heather's days to be very full and often overwhelming. But we do also get to rely on God's strength to persevere each day. We have had a rollercoaster of a moving finish line. One week we are told he and his mom should be reunified within a week, and then we are told it will be at least another month. We are praying that they will be reunified this week. His mom and Heather talk and meet regularly, which has been an opportunity to show Christ's love with her.

At Black Forest Academy, there are always many meaningful things happening and you can always pray that God will use those day to day and week to week activities to deepen relationships, heal hearts, and draw students to himself. While most of the kids come from missionary families, they are still humans who have to make individual decisions to follow Jesus. The majority of the students know the stories and Sunday School answers, but many are lukewarm in their hearts. You can always be praying that God will be working and moving within the hearts of the students. Here are two of the big events coming up.

- High School Retreat, Feb 23-25. This is a big event that is a milestone for many students' spiritual walk. The theme for this year and the retreat is surrender, and what it means to surrender your life to God.
- Service Project Trips, March 22-30. Students will be traveling to Africa or Asia on various teams working with local missionaries. Please pray for meaningful service and students deepening their walk with Christ.

Also be praying for our building project as we are planning on purchasing an old retirement home to turn into three new dorms, as two of our dorm buildings need to retire. Please pray that God will provide the funds needed for this project. It is exciting to see how He has provided in so many ways already.

This upcoming weekend Heather will be going to visit a missionary friend in Barcelona. She found very inexpensive airfare and the flight is less than two hours each way. We hope and pray that our foster baby is reunified with his mom by Friday but I will be able to care for all the kids while Heather is having a little break.

As for our kids, they are working through many of the normal things like friend groups, school, homework, etc.

Stanley just finished with the high school play, *Our Town*, where he played Constable Warren. He has a really close group of guys with whom they have a weekly Bible study and



will go to each other's houses to hang out. Stanley has also started his own bike repair side job. He has been fixing bikes for various people in the community and is trying to save up for a mountain bike.

Holly is working hard in school and is still enjoying singing and acting. She was part of the middle school basketball team, and really enjoyed playing with her friends, even though it meant early morning practices.

Stuart is still loving school. He doesn't talk about the other kids with special needs in his class, but rather the other neurotypical kids and which kid played tag with him that day. He is always trying to find where he belongs in groups, but for the most part he always has so much joy.

Samuel is learning how to work hard in school and what it means to be a friend. Heather recently had parent conferences and his teachers shared how he finds a good balance of being goofy yet respectful, and he tries hard to be a peacemaker among his peers. One of his good friends just returned from 6 months in the USA, so he is happy to have him back.

As for our house in Sandy, it has now been vacant for over 6 months. During this vacancy many people have invested countless hours into gutting and renovating the entire house. Thank you to everyone who has stepped in to help with that. As you can imagine, our bank accounts have dwindled significantly, but God has supplied our needs. We now need to get renters into our house after the work is completed. Please be praying for the right people as soon as possible.

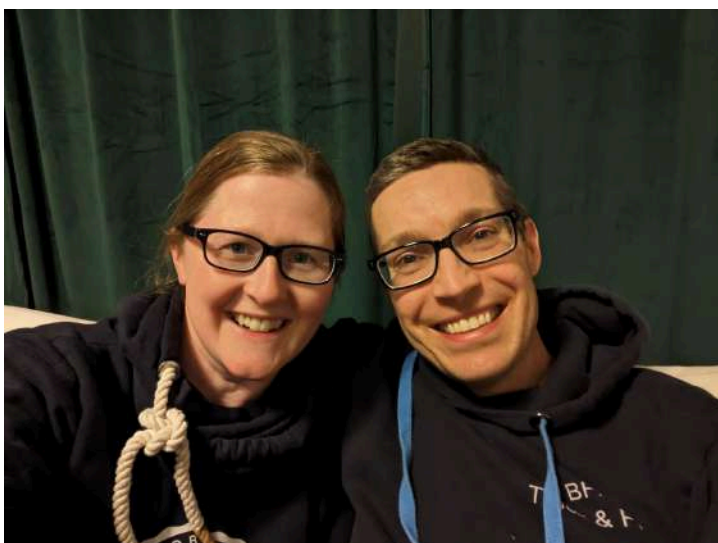
Finally, please be praying for us as we prepare to travel to the USA this summer! Our plan is to visit family in Florida, then arrive in Oregon by July 6, and finally return to Germany August 4. For our trip we have a few needs that you can be praying for or even stepping in to be part of the answered prayer.

- A car to use while we are in Oregon. Ideally a seven passenger van or two smaller cars.
- A place to stay while we are in Oregon. Ideally a four bedroom house in the Gresham or Sandy area.

Thank you for your continued prayer and support. We hope to be able to connect with many of you during our time in the USA this summer.

Serving Him in Kandern, Germany

Scott for Heather, Stanley, Holly, Stuart and Samuel



Stanley as Constable Warren



Enjoying cozy time with the not so little boys.



Seeing Stuart off in the morning



Stanley and friends making Valentine Houses



Studious Holly



Relaxing in the living room

